

## ARLINGTON MEMORIAL BRIDGE

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JANUARY 27, 1925.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed

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Mr. ELLIOTT, from the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, submitted the following

### REPORT

[To accompany S. 3173]

The Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, to which was referred the bill (S. 3173) to provide for the construction of a memorial bridge across the Potomac River from a point near the Lincoln Memorial in the city of Washington to an appropriate point in the State of Virginia, and for other purposes, having duly considered the same, hereby make report of it to the House and with the recommendation that the bill do pass.

A memorial bridge across the Potomac River leading in the general direction of the Lee Mansion on the Arlington Estate has been under consideration by the Congress and the executive departments for more than 75 years. Congress has on several occasions passed laws pursuant to which preliminary plans have been prepared for this bridge. Yet in each case, due to delay in the authorization and active prosecution of the work of construction, the project has been allowed to languish and fall asleep without definite action being taken toward authorization of the project.

Finally in 1913 a law was passed in the public buildings act of March 4, which provided among other things as follows:

SEC. 23. That a commission is hereby created, to consist of the President of the United States, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the chairmen of the Committees on Public Buildings and Grounds of the Senate and House of Representatives, for the purpose of investigating and reporting to Congress a suitable design for a memorial bridge across the Potomac River, from the city of Washington, to a point at or near the Arlington Estate in the State of Virginia, and the said commission is hereby authorized to expend the sum of \$25,000 in procuring such designs and for making such surveys and estimates of cost as they may deem advisable, and report as early as may be to Congress.

Nothing was done under this authorization until nine years later, when an appropriation was made in the executive and independent offices appropriation act, approved June 12, 1922, reading as follows:

To enable the commission created by section 23 of the public buildings act approved March 4, 1913, to investigate and report to Congress a suitable design for a memorial bridge across the Potomac River from the city of Washington to a point at or near the Arlington Estate, in the State of Virginia, together with such surveys and estimates of cost as they may deem advisable, to be expended under the direction of the commission and to remain available until expended, \$25,000.

Immediately after the passage of this act work was actively commenced on general plans and estimates for the proposed bridge and its appropriate approaches and accessories, with the result that on April 22, 1924, the President transmitted to the Congress the preliminary plans with report and recommendation of the Arlington Memorial Bridge Commission, whose membership is composed of Hon. Calvin Coolidge, President of the United States; Hon. Albert B. Cummins, President of the Senate; Hon. Frederick H. Gillett, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Hon. Bert M. Fernald, chairman Senate Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds; Hon. John W. Langley, chairman House Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds.

This commission unanimously favors the immediate commencement of this important and generally approved project, under a 10-year program of construction, with a total expenditure in the 10-year period of \$14,750,000.

The full details of this project are contained in the above-mentioned report of the Arlington Memorial Bridge Commission and the appendix thereto, being the report of the executive and disbursing officer of the commission, Lieut. Col. Clarence O. Sherrill. This report will be found in Senate Document No. 95, Sixty-eighth Congress, first session.

The indorsement which the Arlington Memorial Bridge proposition is receiving throughout the country is surprising. It is not only a national memorial symbolical of the reunion of the North and South but it is a part of the development of our National Capital and is also a part of the transportation system of the whole United States. It will connect up the Lincoln and Lee Highways and will give the Capital one of the most beautiful approaches in the world. At the present time there are seven or eight highways leading into Washington and all of them are a discredit, to say the least, and not in keeping with the Capital of our Nation. In addition, the present facilities are not sufficient to take care of the motor-vehicle traffic from the South and from the North to the South. At times there is a traffic jam at both ends of the Key Bridge and sometimes on the Highway Bridge. This condition will rapidly grow worse partly on account of the enormous increase in the number of visitors who will be able to come to Washington by automobile as a result of the completion of the Lee Highway and other highway projects under the Federal-aid system, to say nothing of the growth of the suburban population of the city.

Your committee feels that the work on this beautiful and patriotic project should be begun as early as possible, especially in view of the fact that after the work is started it will be at least five years before the bridge can be opened to traffic.